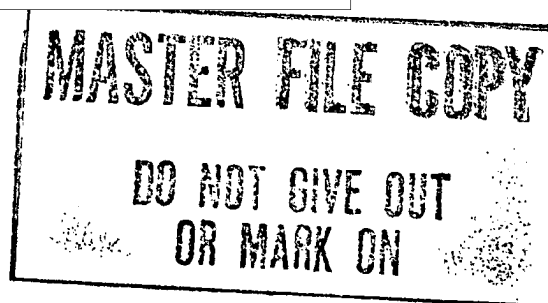


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MEMORANDUM TO HOLDERS

SNIE 76-81

TRENDS IN THE HORN OF AFRICA

Information available as of 27 September 1983 was
used in the preparation of this Estimate.

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THIS ESTIMATE IS ISSUED BY THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE.

THE NATIONAL FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE BOARD CONCURS.

The following intelligence organizations participated in the preparation of the Estimate:

The Central Intelligence Agency, the Defense Intelligence Agency, the National Security Agency, and the intelligence organizations of the Departments of State and the Treasury.

Also Participating:

The Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, Department of the Army

The Director of Naval Intelligence, Department of the Navy

The Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, Department of the Air Force

The Director of Intelligence, Headquarters, Marine Corps

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SCOPE NOTE

The purpose of this Memorandum to Holders is to assess developments in the Horn of Africa since the publication of SNIE 76-81, *Conflicts in the Horn of Africa*, in June 1981, and to estimate the trends likely to affect the interests of the United States in that area over the next two years.

SNIE 76-81 dealt primarily with the conflicts in the Horn: Somali efforts to wrest the Ogaden from Ethiopia; Somali irredentist claims on territory in Kenya and Djibouti; and separatist insurgencies in northern Ethiopia. That Estimate also assessed in some detail the roles of the USSR and Cuba in support of Marxist Ethiopia and the relationship between Soviet activities and objectives in Ethiopia and broader Soviet strategic policies and goals.

At the time of the 1981 Estimate, the involvement of the United States in the area was modest and was largely keyed to the new military access agreements with Somalia and Kenya and to the preservation of other pro-Western governments in the states bordering on Ethiopia. Sudan and Kenya were judged at that time to be relatively stable. The most dramatic changes since the publication of SNIE 76-81 have been the political and economic deterioration of the pro-Western countries of the area, and the much greater—and still growing—US involvement in support of these regimes that in turn support US goals in the region. US military and economic aid to Sudan, Somalia, and Kenya has almost tripled since 1981. The United States is also improving port and airfield facilities in Kenya and Somalia, largely to facilitate CENTCOM planning for contingency operations in the oil-rich Arabian Peninsula and Persian Gulf areas. Joint military exercises are held with Sudanese, Kenyan, and Somali personnel.

Soviet support of Ethiopia remains substantial and a sizable Cuban military force is still in Ethiopia. The Soviet military advisory presence has grown since the last Estimate, and Soviet efforts to promote the political and ideological indoctrination of Ethiopians have increased. The Soviets continue to use Ethiopian facilities to support their Indian Ocean naval squadron, and apparently are asking for more. The Libyan role in the Horn has also increased in the past two years, in part because of the Tripartite Pact (Libya, Ethiopia, and South Yemen). In addition to focusing on the growing and more complex role of the United States,

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this Memorandum updates the assessment of the activities of the Soviets, Libyans, and Cubans in the Horn area, and the probable impact of their presence on US interests there. It also addresses Soviet objectives in the Horn area and the likelihood of further Soviet successes.

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KEY JUDGMENTS

The principal developments in the Horn of Africa of concern to the United States since the publication in 1981 of SNIE 76-81, *Conflicts in the Horn of Africa*, are:

- Increasing signs of instability in pro-Western states (Sudan, Somalia, and Kenya) where the United States has pre-positioning and military access arrangements.
- A much greater US involvement in attempting to shore up the economies and the military establishments of the pro-Western states that support our regional objectives.
- The continuing strong Soviet and Cuban presence and influence in Ethiopia.

All of Ethiopia's neighbors—Sudan, Somalia, Kenya, and Djibouti—are looking to the West, especially to the United States but also to moderate Arabs, for military and economic support. They are nervous about the strong Soviet and Cuban presence in the Horn; they seek help in meeting massive foreign debts; and they need considerable military aid to defend their borders and—in Sudan and Somalia—counter internal discontent.

The national rulers preside over troubled tribal and clan societies, and rely upon relatively weak and poorly armed military establishments. Discontent is rising in Sudan, particularly in the south; traditional clan and subclan warfare in Somalia is intensifying; tribal tensions and discontent with President Moi have become more pronounced in Kenya; and the reduced French budgetary support to Djibouti is adding to the frictions among the tribal elements of that fragile society.

All of these states provide military access or pre-positioning facilities to the United States with little or no formal quid pro quo. The United States, however, has had to take a leading role in the debt rescheduling program for Sudan and in the economic support of Kenya and Somalia. The United States has also become a principal military supplier to Kenya and Somalia and is a major source of arms to Sudan. US economic and military aid to Sudan, Somalia, and Kenya has risen from \$230 million in FY 1981 to a projected \$644 million in FY 1984.

The pro-Western leaders in the region will ask for larger amounts of military aid to curb internal dissidents and, in the case of Sudan and

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Somalia, to satisfy their restless military establishments as well as to defend their borders against Ethiopian or Libyan threats. They will also require much more financial help for their sagging economies and may tend to link this aid to the continued US use of the facilities. They are likely to do less to resolve their own problems, and to rely more on the United States.

In sum, the costs to the United States of maintaining the facilities and access rights in the pro-Western Horn countries are certain to rise—whether or not the present governments remain in power. Some of these leaders are already forming an exaggerated perception of the value of their countries to the United States and of the willingness of the United States to bail them out. Over the short term, the United States will be pressed to provide increasing amounts of economic and military assistance and to be more aggressive in encouraging international institutions and private concerns to provide aid and investment. Over the longer term, perhaps even within the next several years, the pro-Western states in the Horn may attempt to extract rental payments for use of their facilities.

The dangers of large-scale invasions by Ethiopia or Libya to the pro-Western countries are considerably less than the threats to the existing regimes from internal discontent and disorders, stimulated in some cases by Ethiopians and/or Libyans. Given the rising instability in these countries, the positions of the current leaders are likely to become more tenuous in the next two years. In most cases the likely successors to the current leaders would be inclined to pursue a pro-Western policy. There is little likelihood of a pro-Soviet government coming to power in any of these countries, but a successor regime might seek a more nonaligned posture, and thus create new problems for US military planners.

The perennial conflicts in the Horn of Africa are no nearer to resolution than they were two years ago, and continue to tie the Ethiopians closely to the Soviets. Chairman Mengistu needs a continuing flow of Soviet arms for his repeated, unsuccessful assaults on Eritrean and Tigrean guerrillas and for maintaining control over the reconquered Ogaden. The combined forces of the Ethiopian Army and Somali dissidents continue to enjoy superiority over Somali forces along the disputed Ethiopian-Somali border. But, despite the discouraging military situation and US counsels of restraint, hope of regaining the Ogaden is still a key factor in Somali national policy. Mengistu will maintain pressure along the border and order limited cross-border

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strikes, but is not likely to undertake a large-scale invasion in the next year or two.

The Eritrean and Tigrean insurgents in northern Ethiopia are well organized and strongly motivated. They can probably hold their mountainous strongholds and inflict casualties on the Ethiopian Army for the next several years. Mengistu, by refusing to negotiate in good faith with the rebels, leaves himself with no choice but to continue a costly conflict.

Mengistu is in firm control over the Ethiopian Government, but depends upon Soviet arms and advisers, a force of some 9,000 Cubans, and several thousand Soviet, Cuban, and East European military, political, and economic advisers in his efforts to consolidate power and transform Haile Selassie's feudal empire into a centralized Marxist-Leninist state. Mengistu has chosen the Soviet model, rather than had it imposed upon him. He has set a timetable for the establishment of an Ethiopian Communist Party (September 1984) and intends to dominate it through a clique of trusted aides, mostly military officers.

Mengistu seeks drought and refugee relief and specific aid projects from the West, but is willing to make only minor concessions in return. Ethiopia's pressing need for much greater economic assistance (which it is not getting from the Soviets) suggests that there might be an opportunity for the United States to affect the pace—but not the direction—of leftward trends in Ethiopia over the next two years. Yet even substantial US or Western economic aid would have little influence upon Mengistu so long as the northern insurgencies drag on, tensions remain high along the Somali border, and the United States continues to back Somalia militarily.

There appears to be no significant threat to Mengistu's position. His sudden demise, however, would bring prolonged confusion and a power struggle within the armed forces, probably along ideological lines. The successor regime would probably be equally dependent on the Soviets and Cubans, but not necessarily their choice.

Libyan involvement in affairs in the Horn has increased since the 1981 signing of the Tripartite Pact (Libya, Ethiopia, and South Yemen). The Pact has afforded Qadhafi enhanced opportunities for pursuing his goals of overthrowing the Sudanese and Somali Governments and for thwarting US regional objectives. The Pact was never fully implemented, but it has brought to Ethiopia some \$320 million in financial aid from Libya. The current problems between Mengistu and Qadhafi, stemming from the recent contentious meeting of the Organization of

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African Unity (OAU), the Libyan invasion of Chad, and the currently strained relations between Libya and South Yemen illustrate the differences in the respective national and personal goals of Pact members, and the great difficulty for even a radical regime to sustain any kind of close relationship with Qadhafi. Ethiopia and Libya are still likely to collaborate on limited programs where there is a convergence of interest. Mengistu and Qadhafi have long been in agreement on using Somali dissidents to promote the downfall of Siad, but Qadhafi is far more intent than is Mengistu about subverting Sudan.

Some 9,000 Cuban troops and advisers remain in Ethiopia, mostly in the Ogaden. At the present time, the Cuban presence constitutes a strategic reserve against the possibility of a new Somali invasion, but there is little military need for it. While the Cubans have not been engaged in combat for five years, they retain their original operational capabilities. It is unlikely that all of them will return to Cuba within the next two years, primarily because of the Mengistu regime's concern for the overall security situation in Ethiopia. There is also the possibility they could be used in Angola and perhaps even Mozambique.

Soviet activity in the Horn, which began when the Soviets seized on Somalia's need for arms some 20 years ago, suggests the following policy objectives:

- Exploitation of Ethiopian military needs to establish a firmer patron-client relationship and to consolidate Soviet influence in the Ethiopian Government.
- Use of Ethiopian territory to facilitate the projection of Soviet naval and naval air power into the Arabian Sea-Indian Ocean region and the oil-rich Persian Gulf area.
- Use of military and political influence in the Horn to undermine perceived US strategic policies.
- Expansion of Soviet influence by encouraging leftist change and weakening pro-Western governments in black Africa and in the Red Sea area.

The seriousness of Soviet interest and involvement in the Horn is underscored by the large Soviet, East European, and Cuban advisory presence in Ethiopia and by Moscow's provision of some \$4 billion in military assistance to be delivered by 1985. While Moscow's current position hinges on Ethiopia's military needs and Mengistu's ideological preferences, the Soviets are also trying to institutionalize their relationship and influence to prevent a future setback similar to those suffered in Egypt, Sudan, and Somalia in the 1970s. A key Soviet goal has been

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the establishment of a Communist party in Ethiopia through which Moscow could cultivate a reliable cadre of civilian supporters.

Soviet and East European economic advisers are increasing in numbers and influence in the Ethiopian Government and some 5,600 Ethiopian students are being trained in the USSR and Eastern Europe. Soviet ideologues are indoctrinating potential Ethiopian Communist party members, and the Soviet military advisory presence has expanded in the past two years from some 1,400 to roughly 1,700. Despite these Soviet inroads, Mengistu has proved to be a less-than-pliant client, whose version of a Marxist-Leninist state will probably fall short of Soviet expectations. He has thwarted the Soviets on issues of interest to Moscow, and the Ethiopians complain about deficiencies in Soviet economic assistance, spare parts problems, and Moscow's refusal to grant various types of military and technical training.

These frictions may be exacerbated over the next few years, as Ethiopia is scheduled to begin in 1984 major military debt repayments to the USSR of \$200 million a year—an amount it almost certainly cannot meet. There will be some hard bargaining, squabbling, and increased tensions, including some venting of Ethiopian nationalistic and xenophobic feelings. Nonetheless, we believe the Soviet-Ethiopian relationship will remain solid, because each side needs the other. Ethiopia is the USSR's key client in the important Horn of Africa and Moscow is the only source for Ethiopia's continuing military requirements. Hence, while the Soviets may be only partially successful in further consolidating their influence in Addis Ababa, they will retain a strong position with little likelihood of any real setback in the next few years.

The USSR has made mixed progress on its second objective, the improvement of access to Ethiopian facilities to enhance the projection of Soviet power into the Arabian Sea-Red Sea-Indian Ocean areas. Facilities now available appear to be adequate for current Soviet needs. But, according to a source with good access, the Soviets now seem intent on expanding their access. Since the visit of Admiral Gorshkov to Ethiopia and South Yemen in March 1983, the Soviets have apparently requested of both governments permission to expand or develop new facilities. Mengistu has rejected or postponed several Soviet proposals, but has agreed to the addition of some 70 Soviet technicians to the several hundred already at Dahlak Island.

It seems likely that the Soviet efforts to enhance their naval support facilities in Ethiopia and South Yemen apparently are designed to advance the overall strategic aims of projecting military power into

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distant areas and to counter CENTCOM activities in the Horn area—the third major objective of Soviet policy. The Soviets probably believe that the United States has extensive plans for future access and deployment in the Horn area and that a key US objective is to neutralize the Soviet military presence in the Horn of Africa. Mengistu almost certainly sees US policies in the Horn as an effort to encircle and eventually threaten his emerging Marxist state in Ethiopia. The Soviets will keep a close eye on any port and airfield improvements in Somalia and Kenya carried out by US contractors, and will keep the pressure on Mengistu for permission to expand present facilities and perhaps to develop new ones.

On the Soviets' fourth objective—the expansion of Soviet influence in black Africa and the Red Sea area—they are not likely to make much headway in the next two years. They will expect Mengistu to use his position as Chairman of the OAU to advance Soviet causes and denounce the United States. Mengistu is likely to please them on occasion, but may find it convenient for his own purposes to appear evenhanded at other times.

The Soviets probably realize that their best chance to expand influence in the Horn is to exploit the instability of the pro-Western countries there. The previous experience of Sudan and Somalia with the USSR has left unpleasant memories, and Soviet military backing of Ethiopia and Libya virtually rules out a closer connection with the USSR. Other moderate black African states have severe security and economic problems, and are aware of the inability of the USSR to deliver on promises of economic aid. These governments are shaky and some may not survive the next couple of years, but the successor regimes in the currently pro-US Horn countries are not likely to be pro-Soviet or pro-Libyan.

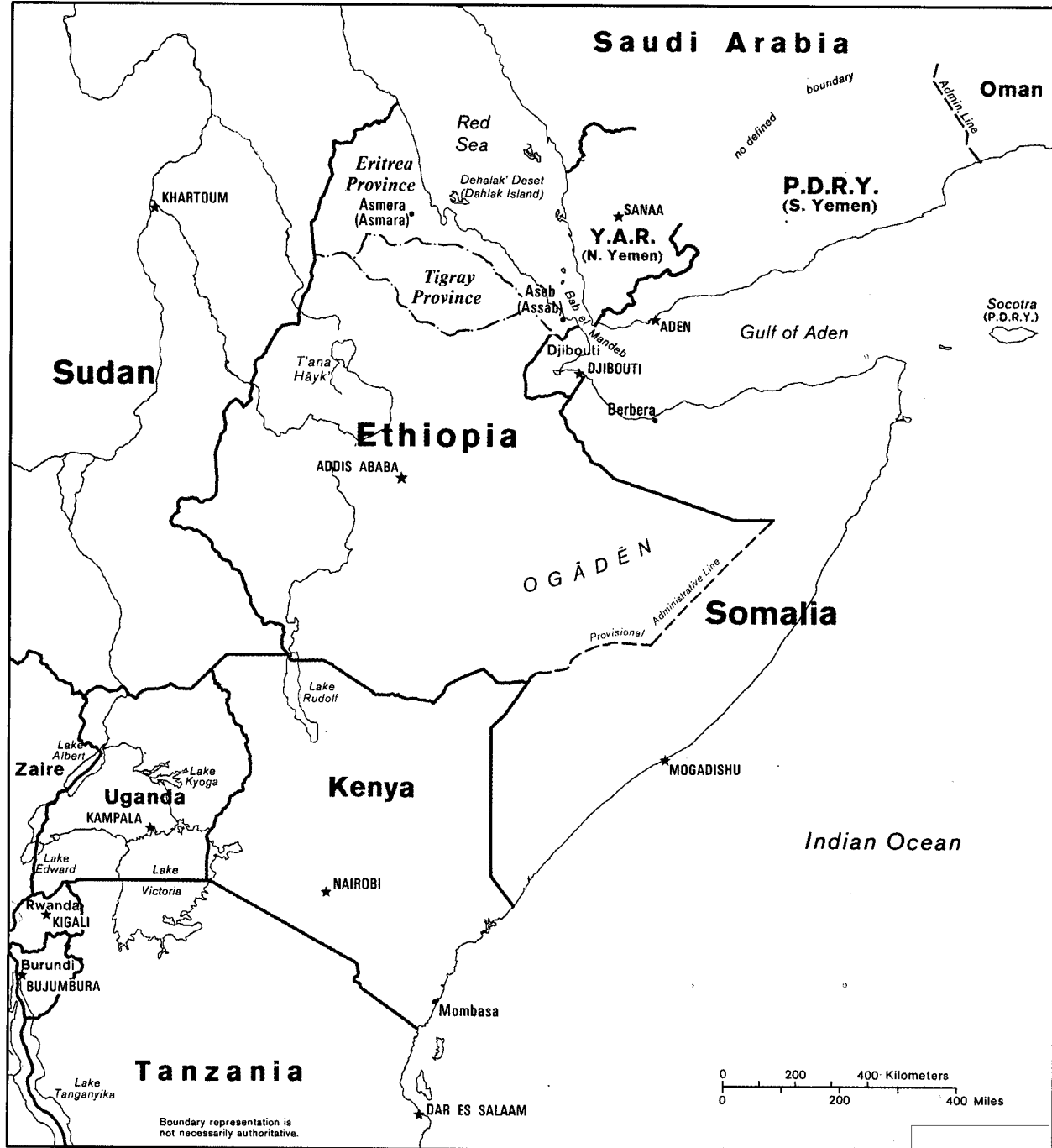
Mengistu's dependence on Soviet military assistance, the debt owed to Moscow, and his concern over US intentions are likely to lead him to yield to Moscow's desires for continued and perhaps more extensive use of military facilities in Ethiopia. On balance, however, the Soviets are unlikely to achieve all of the above objectives over the next two years.

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Figure 1
The Horn of Africa



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54. Like the Europeans, the moderate Arabs want to reduce the Soviet, Cuban, and Libyan influences in the Horn of Africa. Saudi Arabia and Egypt are uneasy about the Soviet military presence in Ethiopia, but are unwilling and unable to do much about it. The Saudis and the Gulf Cooperation Council states are usually willing to provide oil on advantageous terms to Sudan and Somalia, as they do to many other impoverished Islamic states.

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Egypt takes a historical and strategic interest in Sudan and would probably come to its aid if it were seriously threatened by Libyan forces or other elements hostile to Egyptian interests. But Arab aid to Somalia is often given grudgingly, especially since the decline in Arab oil revenues.

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Figure 2
Aden Pact and US-Allied Countries



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